

(Mr. KERRY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1459, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to protect the right of a medicare beneficiary enrolled in a Medicare+Choice plan to receive services at a skilled nursing facility selected by that individual.

S. 1594

At the request of Mr. BOND, the name of the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. EDWARDS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1594, a bill to amend the Small Business Act and Small Business Investment Act of 1958.

S. 1921

At the request of Mr. CAMPBELL, the name of the Senator from Iowa (Mr. GRASSLEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1921, a bill to authorize the placement within the site of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial of a plaque to honor Vietnam veterans who died after their service in the Vietnam war, but as a direct result of that service.

S. 2018

At the request of Mrs. HUTCHISON, the name of the Senator from Vermont (Mr. JEFFORDS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2018, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to revise the update factor used in making payments to PPS hospitals under the medicare program.

S. 2045

At the request of Mr. HATCH, the name of the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. EDWARDS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2045, a bill to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act with respect to H-1B nonimmigrant aliens.

S. 2060

At the request of Mrs. FEINSTEIN, the name of the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. L. CHAFEE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2060, a bill to authorize the President to award a gold medal on behalf of the Congress to Charles M. Schulz in recognition of his lasting artistic contributions to the Nation and the world, and for other purposes.

S. 2123

At the request of Mr. LEVIN, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. 2123, a bill to provide Outer Continental Shelf Impact assistance to State and local governments, to amend the Land and Water Conservation Fund Act of 1965, the Urban Park and Recreation Recovery Act of 1978, and the Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration Act (commonly referred to as the Pittman-Robertson Act) to establish a fund to meet the outdoor conservation and recreation needs of the American people, and for other purposes.

At the request of Ms. LANDRIEU, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. WYDEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2123, *supra*.

S. 2297

At the request of Mr. CRAPO, the name of the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. DASCHLE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2297, a bill to reauthorize

the Water Resources Research Act of 1984.

S. 2365

At the request of Ms. COLLINS, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. DODD) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2365, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to eliminate the 15 percent reduction in payment rates under the prospective payment system for home health services.

S. 2394

At the request of Mr. MOYNIHAN, the name of the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. FRIST) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2394, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to stabilize indirect graduate medical education payments.

S. 2407

At the request of Mr. REID, the names of the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. DASCHLE) and the Senator from Florida (Mr. GRAHAM) were added as cosponsors of S. 2407, a bill to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act with respect to the record of admission for permanent residence in the case of certain aliens.

S. 2408

At the request of Mr. BINGAMAN, the names of the Senator from Alaska (Mr. MURKOWSKI) and the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. L. CHAFEE) were added as cosponsors of S. 2408, a bill to authorize the President to award a gold medal on behalf of the Congress to the Navajo Code Talkers in recognition of their contributions to the Nation.

S. 2417

At the request of Mr. CRAPO, the name of the Senator from Missouri (Mr. ASHCROFT) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2417, a bill to amend the Federal Water Pollution Control Act to increase funding for State nonpoint source pollution control programs, and for other purposes.

S. 2419

At the request of Mr. JOHNSON, the name of the Senator from Louisiana (Ms. LANDRIEU) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2419, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to provide for the annual determination of the rate of the basic benefit of active duty educational assistance under the Montgomery GI Bill, and for other purposes.

S. 2486

At the request of Mr. WARNER, the name of the Senator from Delaware (Mr. ROTH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2486, a bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to improve access to benefits under the TRICARE program; to extend and improve certain demonstration programs under the Defense Health Program; and for other purposes.

S. CON. RES. 60

At the request of Mr. FEINGOLD, the names of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. DODD), the Senator from Indiana

(Mr. BAYH), the Senator from Maine (Ms. COLLINS), and the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. HELMS) were added as cosponsors of S.Con.Res. 60, a concurrent resolution expressing the sense of Congress that a commemorative postage stamp should be issued in honor of the U.S.S. *Wisconsin* and all those who served aboard her.

S.J. RES. 44

At the request of Mr. HATCH, his name was added as a cosponsor of S.J. Res. 44, a joint resolution supporting the Day of Honor 2000 to honor and recognize the service of minority veterans in the United States Armed Forces during World War II.

SENATE RESOLUTION 308—CONGRATULATING THE INTERNATIONAL HOUSE ON THE OCCASION OF ITS 75TH ANNIVERSARY

Mr. GORTON (for himself, Mr. MOYNIHAN, and Mr. ROCKEFELLER) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary:

S. RES. 308

Whereas International House at 500 Riverside Drive, New York City, was founded in 1924 as a residence and program center for graduate students and trainees from all nations;

Whereas International House was created to allow diverse peoples from around the world the opportunity to live together in a shared cultural and intellectual environment, and enable its residents and members to understand and better appreciate people of divergent backgrounds; and

Whereas in the last 75 years International House has grown from this fundamental concept to become an internationally recognized institution, serving as a vital resource for the global academic, business, professional, and artistic communities: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate commends International House for its distinguished service to the people of the United States and all citizens of the world in the promotion of global understanding and world peace and extends congratulations to International House on the occasion of its 75th anniversary.

AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED

MILITARY CONSTRUCTION APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2001

DOMENICI AMENDMENT NO. 3156

Mr. BURNS (for Mr. DOMENICI (for himself and Mr. BINGAMAN)) proposed an amendment to the bill (S. 2521) making appropriations for military construction, family housing, and base realignment and closure for the Department of Defense for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2001, and for other purposes; as follows:

On page 44 line 6, strike “\$136,000,000” and replace with “\$221,000,000”; and on page 44

line 12, strike "\$136,000,000" and replace with "\$221,000,000".

GREGG AMENDMENT NO. 3157

Mr. BURNS (for Mr. GREGG) proposed an amendment to the bill, S. 2521, supra; as follows:

At the appropriate place in the bill, insert the following:

SEC. . Notwithstanding any other provision of law, none of the funds appropriated or otherwise made available by this or any other Act may be used to allow for the entry into, or withdrawal from warehouse for consumption in the United States of diamonds if the country of origin in which such diamonds were mined (as evidenced by a legible certificate of origin) is the Republic of Sierra Leone, the Republic of Liberia, the Republic of Cote d'Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, or the Republic of Angola.

STEVENS (AND OTHERS) AMENDMENT NO. 3158

Mr. BURNS (for Mr. STEVENS (for himself, Mr. COVERDELL, and Mr. DEWINE)) proposed an amendment to the bill, S. 2521, supra; as follows:

On page 26, at line 15, strike, "\$74,859,000", and insert in lieu thereof, "\$542,859,000";

On page 27, at line 7 and 8, strike "": *Provided*", and insert in lieu thereof "": Acquisition of six C-130J long-range maritime patrol aircraft authorized under section 812(G) of the Western Hemisphere Drug Elimination Act that are capable of meeting defense-related and other elements of the Coast Guard's multi-mission requirements, \$468,000,000: *Provided*, That the procurement of maritime patrol aircraft funded under this heading shall not, in any way, influence the procurement strategy, program requirements, or down-select decision pertaining to the Coast Guard's Deepwater Capability Replacement Project; *Provided further*".

DOMENICI (AND BINGAMAN) AMENDMENT NO. 3159

Mr. BURNS (for Mr. DOMENICI (for himself and Mr. BINGAMAN)) proposed an amendment to the bill, S. 2521, supra; as follows:

On page 35, between lines 17 and 18, insert the following:

RESEARCH, DEVELOPMENT, TEST, AND EVALUATION

RESEARCH, DEVELOPMENT, TEST, AND EVALUATION, ARMY

For an additional amount for "Research, Development, Test, and Evaluation, Army", \$5,700,000 for continued test activities under the Tactical High Energy Laser (THEL) program of the Army: *Provided*, That the entire amount is designated by Congress as an emergency requirement pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985.

MCCONNELL (AND OTHERS) AMENDMENT NO. 3160

Mr. BURNS (for Mr. MCCONNELL (for himself, Mr. STEVENS, and Mr. WARNER)) proposed an amendment to the bill, S. 2521, supra; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. . USE OF DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE FACILITIES AS POLLING PLACES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the Secretary of Defense shall not prohibit the designation or use of any Department of Defense facility, currently designated by a State or local election official, or used since January 1, 1996, as an official polling place in connection with a local, State, or Federal election, as such official polling place.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The prohibition under subsection (a) shall apply to any election occurring on or after the date of enactment of this section and before December 31, 2000.

JEFFORDS AMENDMENT NO. 3161

Mr. BURNS (for Mr. JEFFORDS) proposed an amendment to the bill, S. 2521, supra; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. . ELECTRONIC AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY.

Section 508(f)(1) of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 794d(f)(1)) is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (A), by striking "Effective" and all that follows through "1998," and inserting "Effective 6 months after the date of publication by the Access Board of final standards described in subsection (a)(2)."; and

(2) in subparagraph (B), by striking "2 years" and all that follows and inserting "6 months after the date of publication by the Access Board of final standards described in subsection (a)(2).".

DASCHLE AMENDMENT NO. 3162

Mrs. MURRAY (for Mr. DASCHLE) proposed an amendment to the bill S. 2521, supra; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. . FLOOD MITIGATION NEAR PIERRE, SOUTH DAKOTA.

Section 136(a)(3) of title I of division C of the Omnibus Consolidated and Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Act, 1999 (112 Stat. 2681-596), is amended by adding at the end the following:

"(C) DETERMINATION OF ECONOMIC JUSTIFICATION.—

"(i) IN GENERAL.—A determination of economic justification under subparagraph (A) shall be based on an assumption that the Federal Government is liable for ground water damage to land or property described in paragraph (1).

"(ii) EFFECT OF CLAUSE.—Clause (i) does not impose on the Federal Government any liability in addition to any liability that the Federal Government may have under law in effect on October 20, 1998."

STEVENS (AND INOUE) AMENDMENT NO. 3163

Mr. BURNS (for Mr. STEVENS (for himself and Mr. INOUE)) proposed an amendment to the bill, S. 2521, supra; as follows:

AMENDMENT NO. 3163

At the appropriate place in the bill, insert: "SEC. . Section 8114 of the Department of Defense Appropriations Act, 1999 (Public Law 105-262) is amended—

"And other SOFA claims" to be inserted following "... the funds made available for

payments to persons, communities, or other entities in Italy for reimbursement property damages. . . ."

FOREIGN OPERATIONS, EXPORT FINANCING, AND RELATED PRO- GRAMS APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2001

BAUCUS (AND OTHERS) AMENDMENT NO. 3164

(Ordered to lie on the table.)

Mr. BAUCUS (for himself, Mr. ROBERTS, and Mrs. MURRAY) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by them to the bill (S. 2522) making appropriations for foreign operations, export financing, and related programs for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2001, and for other purposes.

On page 140, between lines 19 and 20, insert the following:

SEC. . USE OF FUNDS FOR THE UNITED STATES-ASIA ENVIRONMENTAL PARTNERSHIP.

Notwithstanding any other provision of law that restricts assistance to foreign countries, funds appropriated by this or any other Act making appropriations pursuant to part I of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 that are made available for the United States-Asia Environmental Partnership may be made available for activities for the People's Republic of China.

FREEDOM TO E-FILE ACT

FITZGERALD AMENDMENT NO. 3165

Mr. BROWNBACK (for Mr. FITZGERALD) proposed an amendment to the bill (S. 777) requiring the Secretary of Agriculture to establish an electronic filing and retrieval system to enable farmers and other persons to file paperwork electronically with selected agencies of the Department of Agriculture and to access public information regarding the programs administered by these agencies; as follows:

Strike all after the enacting clause and insert the following:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Freedom to E-File Act".

SEC. 2. ELECTRONIC FILING AND RETRIEVAL.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, in accordance with subsection (c), the Secretary of Agriculture (referred to in this Act as the "Secretary") shall, to the maximum extent practicable, establish an Internet-based system that enables agricultural producers to access all forms of the agencies of the Department of Agriculture (referred to in this Act as the "Department") specified in subsection (b).

(b) APPLICABILITY.—The agencies referred to in subsection (a) are the following:

(1) The Farm Service Agency.
(2) The Natural Resources Conservation Service.

(3) The rural development components of the Department included in the Secretary's service center initiative regarding State and field office collocation implemented pursuant to section 215 of the Department of Agriculture Reorganization Act of 1994 (7 U.S.C. 6915).

(4) The agricultural producer programs component of the Commodity Credit Corporation administered by the Farm Service Agency and the Natural Resources Conservation Service.

(c) IMPLEMENTATION.—In carrying out subsection (a), the Secretary shall—

(1) provide a method by which agricultural producers may—

(A) download from the Internet the forms of the agencies specified in subsection (b); and

(B) submit completed forms via electronic facsimile, mail, or similar means;

(2) redesign the forms by incorporating into the forms user-friendly formats and self-help guidance materials; and

(3) ensure that the agencies specified in subsection (b)—

(A) use computer hardware and software that is compatible among the agencies and will operate in a common computing environment; and

(B) develop common Internet user-interface locations and applications to consolidate the agencies' news, information, and program materials.

(d) PROGRESS REPORTS.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall submit to Congress a report that describes the progress made toward implementing the Internet-based system required under this section.

SEC. 3. ACCESSING INFORMATION AND FILING OVER THE INTERNET.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of this Act, in accordance with subsection (b), the Secretary shall expand implementation of the Internet-based system established under section 2 by enabling agricultural producers to access and file all forms and, at the option of the Secretary, selected records and information of the agencies of the Department specified in section 2(b).

(b) IMPLEMENTATION.—In carrying out subsection (a), the Secretary shall ensure that an agricultural producer is able—

(1) to file electronically or in paper form, at the option of the agricultural producer, all forms required by agencies of the Department specified in section 2(b);

(2) to file electronically or in paper form, at the option of the agricultural producer, all documentation required by agencies of the Department specified in section 2(b) and determined appropriate by the Secretary; and

(3) to access information of the Department concerning farm programs, quarterly trade, economic, and production reports, and other similar production agriculture information that is readily available to the public in paper form.

SEC. 4. AVAILABILITY OF AGENCY INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY FUNDS.

(a) RESERVATION OF FUNDS.—From funds made available for agencies of the Department specified in section 2(b) for information technology or information resource management, the Secretary shall reserve from those agencies' applicable accounts a total amount equal to not more than the following:

(1) For fiscal year 2001, \$3,000,000.

(2) For each subsequent fiscal year, \$2,000,000.

(b) TIME FOR RESERVATION.—The Secretary shall notify Congress of the amount to be reserved under subsection (a) for a fiscal year not later than December 1 of that fiscal year.

(c) USE OF FUNDS.—

(1) ESTABLISHMENT.—Funds reserved under subsection (a) shall be used to establish the Internet-based system required under section

2 and to expand the system as required by section 3.

(2) MAINTENANCE.—Once the system is established and operational, reserved amounts shall be used for maintenance and improvement of the system.

(d) RETURN OF FUNDS.—Funds reserved under subsection (a) and unobligated at the end of the fiscal year shall be returned to the agency from which the funds were reserved, to remain available until expended.

SEC. 5. FEDERAL CROP INSURANCE CORPORATION AND RISK MANAGEMENT AGENCY.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than December 1, 2000, the Federal Crop Insurance Corporation and the Risk Management Agency shall submit to the Committee on Agriculture of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry of the Senate a plan, that is consistent with this Act, to allow agricultural producers to—

(1) obtain, over the Internet, from approved insurance providers all forms and other information concerning the program under the jurisdiction of the Corporation and Agency in which the agricultural producer is a participant; and

(2) file electronically all paperwork required for participation in the program.

(b) ADMINISTRATION.—The plan shall—

(1) conform to sections 2(c) and 3(b); and

(2) prescribe—

(A) the location and type of data to be made available to agricultural producers;

(B) the location where agricultural producers can electronically file their paperwork; and

(C) the responsibilities of the applicable parties, including agricultural producers, the Risk Management Agency, the Federal Crop Insurance Corporation, approved insurance providers, crop insurance agents, and brokers.

(c) IMPLEMENTATION.—Not later than December 1, 2001, the Federal Crop Insurance Corporation and the Risk Management Agency shall complete implementation of the plan submitted under subsection (a).

SEC. 6. CONFIDENTIALITY.

In carrying out this Act, the Secretary—

(1) may not make available any information over the Internet that would otherwise not be available for release under section 552 or 552a of title 5, United States Code; and

(2) shall ensure, to the maximum extent practicable, that the confidentiality of persons is maintained.

NOTICE OF HEARINGS

COMMITTEE ON INDIAN AFFAIRS

Mr. CAMPBELL. Mr. President, I would like to announce that the Committee on Indian Affairs will meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, May 24, 2000, at 9:30 a.m. to conduct a hearing on S. 611, the Indian Federal Recognition Administrative Procedures Act of 1999. The hearing will be held in room 485, Russell Senate Building.

Note: This hearing was originally scheduled for 9:30 a.m., May 17.

Those wishing additional information may contact committee staff at 202/224-2251.

THE CONFIRMATION OF JUDGES

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I know the distinguished leader has been work-

ing on trying to find a way to confirm some more judges. I hope we do.

I remind the Senate, and the American public, that there is a mistaken belief that in a Presidential election year we stop confirming judges. That is not so.

As one who has been here for 25 years, I note that there is an informal procedure called the Thurmond rule, named after our beloved President pro tempore, the Senator from South Carolina, STROM THURMOND. This rule basically says that as we get close to the Presidential election time—July, August, and into the fall—we slow down and nearly stop the confirmation of judges to lifetime appointments to see how the Presidential election comes out, because the next President will be able to nominate judges.

But having said that, I point out what happened in the last year of President Bush's term. Democrats controlled the Senate, and we confirmed 66 judges—66 judges nominated by President Bush—more than have been confirmed in any year of President Clinton's term in which there has been a Republican majority, even when he was not facing reelection. In 1996 they confirmed only 17 judges all year.

With a Democratic Senate in the last year of President Reagan's term, we did not have this kind of a slowdown and stoppage. Democrats confirmed more than 40 judges.

I hope we will look, first and foremost, not at some kind of partisan game but at what is best for the judiciary.

We are seen throughout the world as having the most independent federal judiciary anywhere. Look at what happens in other parts of the world where the President or Prime Minister or leader of a country can tell the judiciary exactly what to do, and they do it. Look at what happened in Peru. President Fujimori got the Supreme Court to allow him to run unconstitutionally for a third term.

Look at a number of other countries around the world where dictators, and those who seize power, get the courts to bend to their will. That is not done here in the United States. Our Federal judiciary truly is independent. We should protect their independence by not making judges a partisan pawn in a political program. We should make sure they remain independent.

Democrats have given an enormous amount of flexibility to Republican Presidents. I hope—it may be a vain hope—that a Democratic President would get at least a goodly percentage of that same kind of flexibility from a Republican-controlled Senate. If we were to confirm all 16 of the judges on the Senate Executive Calendar today, we still would only have confirmed 23 judges so far this year. That is about half the total from 1988 and only one-third of the 66 judges confirmed in 1992.